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EDUCATIONAL NEWS AND EDITORIAL COMMENT

DEPARTMENT OF SUPERINTENDENCE AT ATLANTIC CITY FEBRUARY 25—MARCH 2

The proximity of an army cantonment to Atlanta has placed such a severe tax upon hotel accommodations that that city has found it impossible to care for six thousand additional visitors. Atlantic City has been selected instead.

Doctor Finegan says:

There is probably no city in the country which has so many fine hotels as Atlantic City. It will be possible to provide a room with accommodations in a first-class hotel satisfactory in price and satisfactory in accommodations for every member of the department. One of the finest auditoriums in the country with a seating capacity of nine thousand and with perfect acoustic properties will be placed at the service of the department. The city provides many smaller auditoriums and assembly halls. These are easily accessible from any of the leading hotels. The hotels are so near each other and so uniformly good that it is unnecessary to choose any one as the headquarters for the department. In order, however, to make it possible for members to find the officials of the Association the following hotels will be chosen as the headquarters for officers: the Traymore, the Marlborough-Blenheim, the Chalfonte, and the Breakers.

Since hotel accommodations are so ample there need be no haste in making reservations. We expect to have within a few days a printed statement showing the names of hotels, the rates, and all information complete. These will be sent to the press and to state directors at the earliest moment. The rates for rooms and meals seem to be much lower in Atlantic City than in other places considered for the meeting. Tell your friends not to write for reservations until after this information arrives.

SAFEGUARDING WAR APPEALS

The Indiana State Council of Defense is receiving letters from school superintendents who object to the never-ending requests that come to them from various war-service organizations desiring the use of schools as a medium for their operations. While many of these organizations are

doing a fine service to the nation, it is manifest that there should be some clearing-house to which requests for entering the schools should be referred before receiving recognition by the school authorities.

In order to provide for this situation the State Teachers' Association at its recent meeting in Indianapolis very wisely recognized "the Educational Section of the State Council of Defense as the official committee for guidance and advice on all war-service work required of the schools of Indiana."

In order that this section might serve the schools in the best possible manner in this respect a Committee on Approval has been created to study the problems facing the schools and to recommend methods of action.

This committee is sending to all superintendents and high-school principals of the state a very timely letter, the wisdom of which is apparent to all. It seems probable that other organizations may have to take similar steps for their self-protection. The question is not whether we shall aid all commendable war-service activities, but rather whether our assistance shall be prudently given. The educators are undoubtedly on the right track.

1116 MERCHANTS BANK BUILDING
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
November 16, 1917

Superintendent of Schools

DEAR SIR: School officials are advised not to permit any person or organization to ask school children to sign a war pledge, either for a financial contribution or for service, without first giving them an opportunity to talk the matter over in their homes.

We believe that any proposition that cannot secure the support of our boys and girls with the approval of their parents should be rejected by the schools.

Very sincerely yours,

J. J. PETTIGEON, *Secretary Educational Section*
per R. E. CAVANAUGH, *Assistant Secretary*

Approved: HORACE ELLIS, *Chairman*

COLLEGE MEN AND THE WAR

Dean F. P. Keppel, of Columbia, pays a graceful and well-deserved tribute to college men who are thoughtfully assuming their full share of the burdens of the war. Columbia's honorable record is being duplicated proportionately in every college in the land. Dean Keppel says:

The young man in college who has failed to ask himself how he may best take his share in the nation's responsibility is the rare exception. Their

action has been marked, not only by proper recognition of the emergency, but by a high degree of intelligence of choice—from the glorious risks of the Aviation Corps to the humdrum work of tilling the fields, or, even harder, decision to finish a course in order to be of greater service later on. As a whole, the undergraduates and young alumni of our colleges have made a record of which the nation may well be proud.

No one except a few paciphobes who had been alarmed at the growing habit of undergraduates to think for themselves feared that our students as individuals would stand back in the fear of hardship or danger when the new call to arms should come, any more than they did in '61 and '98; but very few, if any, realized how complete a revolution in our apparently hard-and-fast institutional and social life would be the result, or that this could come almost as a matter of course. The students gave up without a moment's hesitation their cherished games and gatherings and all the careless, but comfortable, routine of their daily lives. In Columbia College, for example, out of 1,453 students who registered at the beginning of the second half-year, no fewer than 629 had entered some form of national service before commencement.

CHANGES IN COLLEGE LIFE

Dean Keppel sees also certain marked changes in college life which, he thinks, will certainly be the inevitable result of our war experiences.

It is also too soon to foretell what permanent changes the war will work in the organization and administration of the colleges and in student life, but that these changes will be profound there is little doubt. Faculties and students alike will have already learned that regulations and customs which seem to be of the very essence of collegiate structure can be swept aside without shock, to say nothing of catastrophe. When the normal course is resumed, many of these will never be restored or will be in a form unrecognizable. On the other hand, certain tendencies which had been at work sometimes for years preceding the war will be greatly accelerated and will come to fruition without the bitter struggle which would otherwise have been inevitable.

The change in the Faculty point of view which, of course, has operated and will operate with varying intensity in different institutions will, I think, be along the following lines:

In the first place, the parental attitude which the American college has always maintained toward its students will no longer be limited to matters of personal morals or conduct, but will include the student's public usefulness, a recognition of his place in the public order. It will mean changes in the curriculum to provide for such usefulness, not alone in military subjects, but in geography and international studies and in other fields. It will involve also an increased realization of the importance of the physical fitness of the group as a whole, as contrasted with the possession of winning teams of specialists.

The colleges should plan to profit by the present public recognition of the part played by the non-technical undergraduate courses and by the best elements in college life in producing a type of resourceful young men, willing and ready to take a responsible part in any national emergency.

THE GARY SYSTEM IN NEW YORK

An educational tragedy was enacted in Chicago when the first school board of reasonable size was inaugurated under a weak and scheming city administration. Now New York, about to inaugurate a board of seven members, has fallen into the hands of Tammany. The irony of the situation in both cities is not unsimilar to what occurred in Des Moines a few years ago. In that city the first city commissioners elected were the very leaders of petty politics who had opposed the adoption of the commission form of government. Only a very unintelligent citizen would allow himself to be prejudiced against a small board by what is happening in Chicago and what may happen in New York. The best plan of organization known cannot rise far above the level of the officials chosen to run the machine. It is only fair to add that friends of Mayor Hylan assert that he is vigorously championing a strict divorcing of the board of education from interference on the part of the city administration. Of course this is a consummation devoutly to be desired. We shall suspend judgment, hoping to be compelled to apologize.

Mr. Wirt may no longer be needed, and Mayor Hylan may change his mind when he really forces the placing of 20,000 children, now on full time under the Gary system, back on part time. New York simply cannot keep pace with her school population. Moreover, Mayor Hylan and his new board would be blind indeed to ignore the almost unanimous approbation of school executives.

One district-school superintendent of the Bronx, who confesses his initial skepticism of the system, has today this comment:

I have now been for more than two years engaged in reorganizing some of the schools of my district in accordance with the Gary plan, and here are some of the results I note, as shown in a report of mine which has just been published by the Board of Education:

1. One-half of my children, 30,000 in number, are in Gary schools.
2. So well are the parents pleased with the schools that during the first year of operation scarcely a dozen complaints against them were registered in my office from the parents of all these children, while scores of requests were

made for transfers from regular schools to Gary schools. The recent opposition to these schools originated in the lower Bronx and in parts of Manhattan where there are no Gary schools.

3. Not long ago the so-called Federation of Parents' Associations secured permission to hold an anti-Gary meeting in one of my Gary schools, where 3,200 children are registered. There were eight or ten anti-Gary shouters who appeared to conduct the meeting, and the audience consisted of four parents, all of whom are in favor of the Gary plan. The organizers of the meeting forgot to publish a report of the proceedings, so I am doing it for them.

4. The duplication of eleven schools has had the effect of giving 13,079 children who formerly had a four-hour day a school day ranging from five hours to six hours and twenty minutes. If we had not adopted the Gary plan, twelve of my schools which now have only 9,252 on short time would have had 22,331 on short time. We have increased the capacity of the buildings about 40 per cent, at the same time that we have greatly improved the equipment, enriched the course of study, and lengthened the school day for the child without lengthening it for the teacher.

5. The total cost of this short-time reduction and improved education for the eleven schools to date is \$368,373 .60. The cost by the old plan of providing a reserved seat for each child would have been \$1,733,472, without improvement in equipment and instruction.

6. A uniform graduation test given to the 8B classes of all the schools of my district last January produced the following results:

AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF GROUPS OF SCHOOLS

Subject	Duplicate	Regular
Arithmetic No. 1.....	85.3	80
Arithmetic No. 2.....	74	68.4
Spelling.....	89	82.2
Composition.....	84	80.7
Reading.....	71	72
Grammar.....	74.1	74.4
Total English.....	75.7	75.3
History.....	77	77.7
Geography.....	77.7	79.8
	707.8	690.5

On the basis of the total number of points scored, the duplicate schools are 2.5 per cent better than the regular schools.

7. A comparison of the results of my personal classroom inspections in every class of the district (1,500 in number) during the last scholastic year with the results of the preceding year shows these results:

GAINS AND LOSSES (Points)

	DUPLICATE		REGULAR	
	Gain	Loss	Gain	Loss
Reading.....	0.9	.....	.....	1.0
Spelling.....	0.5	.....	.....	0.7
Etymology.....	22.0	.....	.....	2.1
Mean. and use.....	2.3	.....	1.7	.....
Grammar.....	.....	0.3	.....	.....
Arithmetic.....	0.3	0.3	.....	1.3
Total.....	26.0	0.3	1.7	5.1

THE PASSING OF LITERARY DICTATORS

Mr. A. Francis Trams, in a recent article of the *English Journal*, "Bandmastering the Class-Period," emphasizes a point dear to the hearts of all the new-epoch teachers of English as well as of other subjects. He insists upon the obvious absurdity of forcing upon students ready-made ideas and opinions, of furnishing them with arbitrarily defined formulas, of cramming down their throats huge doses of informational material, which they are to swallow unquestioningly because, forsooth, their elders have decided that its prescription is "good for them."

More and more we are coming to realize that such systems are destructive of initiative and independent thinking; they can result only in a dwarfing or blasting of the mental life of the individual. We are learning to agree with Mr. Trams that "pupils must think themselves into the faith that is their's just as surely as grown persons"; and "they must realize that when they study, the only thing worth while for them is the thing that happens within themselves." Thus we are trying to lead them to do voluntary work, to establish a habit of thoughtful reasoning, to develop the critical instead of the passively receptive attitude.

We are trying to do this. And we need constantly to remind ourselves of the overwhelming importance of such an attitude on our part. The old order of teacher, "that ponderous reservoir for the storing and imparting of knowledge," as Pendleton aptly terms her, is still with us. The literary dictator, the professional dispenser of approved gems of thought, has not yet altogether vanished from our midst. And alas! even the best of us all too often find ourselves astride pet hobbyhorses, declaiming to a listening class our opinions, our ideas of an essay, or a

line of poetry, instead of quietly aiding them to an intelligent discussion of their impressions, their reactions. We need constantly to remind ourselves that teaching can never be truly effective until it becomes a definite spur to the mental activity of the student, a stimulant and a goad to intellectual effort on his part. We need to remember the words of Cardinal Newman: "Enlightenment consists, not merely in the passive reception into the mind of a number of ideas, hitherto unknown to it, but in the mind's energetic, simultaneous action upon and towards and among these new ideas which are rushing in upon it." Our business as teachers, therefore, is not primarily the communication of facts; it is rather the development in our pupils of this formative power, this critical, dynamic force, which will reduce to order and meaning the objects of knowledge and "leaven the dense mass of facts and events with the elastic force of reason."

PENNY LUNCHES IN CHICAGO

For a time at least no child in Chicago public schools is to be allowed to go hungry because he has only a penny for his noonday lunch. Orders to this effect have gone to the principals of all schools in which penny lunches are served. At the beginning of the present school year it was found necessary to cut down the luncheon served for one cent; a child was given either a bowl of soup or a sandwich, whereas he used to get both. When the city Board of Education for legal reasons refused to appropriate the necessary funds, President Davis, of the Board, spurred by the pressure of women's clubs, offered to raise \$5,000 by private subscription. To a certain extent all charity is open to the objections of "paternalism" and "breeding paupers." But public charity of this sort is often more unwisely expended.

LETTING DOWN THE BARS AND RAISING EFFICIENCY

The high-school principals of Chicago have recommended to the Board of Education a radical change in the present promotional scheme for high-school teachers. At present new teachers must be started at the bottom and apparently attain promotion through length of service rather than through efficiency. The proposed plan provides for the appointment of new instructors:

1. By examination, if a college graduate with two years' experience as a high-school teacher outside.

2. By a probationary period, if a college graduate, though without teaching experience.
3. By committee approval, if a successful teacher in an outside school; or
4. By choice of principal to fill a position in the teaching of a technical subject.

Superintendent Shoop transmitted these proposals to the Board without recommendation, although he acknowledged merit in the plan of revision. The principals naturally believe that the efficiency of their teaching forces can be materially raised by the infusion of new blood, and the resulting spur to all teachers to keep alert and progressive. The proposal ought to be adopted.

SUPREME AND SUPER SUPERINTENDENTS

Detroit: From the "Regulations of the School Board":

He shall have sole power to nominate and to assign, transfer, promote, and demote or suspend all assistant superintendents, supervisors, principals, teachers, and other employés of the board of education as hereinafter provided. All nominations, promotions, demotions, suspensions, assignments, and transfers of employés of the board of education which shall be made by the superintendent shall be reported in writing to the board at its next regular meeting and shall stand confirmed unless disapproved by the board by a vote of not less than four members of the board. He shall have immediate control of all assistant superintendents, supervisors, principals, and teachers. All directions and suggestions to them with reference to the performance of their respective duties shall come through him.

Chicago:

REPORT FROM SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATION OF APPOINTMENTS TO THE EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT

Your Special Committee, to whom was assigned the work of investigation of the nominations of the Superintendent of Schools for various positions in the educational system, submits the following report:

Your Committee has held conference with the Superintendent of Schools, and after reviewing the various recommendations, respectfully recommends that Report No. 323, providing for the establishment of the Department of Research and Educational Standards, be deferred for further consideration by the Committee.

That Report No. 324, providing for the appointment and transfers of heads of departments, be adopted with the exception of the appointment of

Mr. Orville T. Bright to the position of Examiner, which part your Committee has referred back to the Superintendent for further consideration.

That Reports Nos. 325 and 326 be approved.

Your Committee further reports that complications have arisen owing to the waiving of certain appointments that have been made by persons selected for district superintendents which render it necessary to readjust certain reports.

Your Committee therefore recommends that Report No. 336-B be deferred for further consideration and readjustment, and that Report No. 336-C be approved with the exception of the transfer of Mr. Henry C. Cox to the Farragut School, action on this to be withheld until there is a certainty that a vacancy will occur in the Farragut School.

Your Committee further recommends that the first and third recommendations in Report No. 336-D be deferred, and that the appointment of Mr. William D. Dodge as principal be changed from the Burr School to the Alcott School on the recommendation of the Superintendent.

Your Committee further recommends that Report No. 336-E be approved, and that Report No. 336-F, owing to the waiving of two appointees in this report, be referred back to the Superintendent of Schools for further consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

EDWIN S. DAVIS, *Chairman*
ALBERT H. SEVERINGHAUS
SADIE BAY ADAIR, M.D.
Special Committee.

In other words, the Chicago Board of Education keeps its hold upon matters which are purely administrative, in the one field in which it is imperative that a superintendent should have a free hand. Whether or not there are factional, partisan, religious, or race prejudices back of the Board's action on these various reports is unimportant. The Board is usurping functions which belong to the executive, and to him alone.

ILLINOIS SCHOOLBOYS AND THE FARMS

The Illinois State Council of Defense, by the aid of a committee of prominent educators under the chairmanship of State Superintendent F. J. Blair, is planning to mobilize 25,000 high-school boys for farmwork in 1918. Twelve thousand will be available from Cook County alone.

These boys will be enrolled in the United States boys' working reserve early in January and their curriculums modified so that they may leave school May 1. Throughout the state more than 25,000 boys are to be enrolled.

Beginning February 1, the boys enrolled will speed up on their studies for the ensuing three months, and in addition will take the new agricultural course in thirty lessons, which is designed to give them a practical knowledge of horses, livestock, dairying, poultry, seeds, fertilizers, farm tools, gardening, gas engines, crops, planting, and harvesting. Last summer the boys went to the farms without preliminary training, and their efficiency was retarded by their "greenness."

For the work they do on the farm the boys will receive credits in their curriculum equal to those they would have earned if they remained in school during May and June. The University of Illinois is a party to this agreement, and other universities and colleges are expected to follow suit.

In order to make the agricultural course as practical as possible the committee recommends that trips be made by the boys to the stockyards, stock shows, and farm exhibits, and the use of motion pictures of farmwork. The teachers who put in extra hours giving the boys six months' work in four will have their vacation periods lengthened correspondingly.

The government points out that boys from sixteen to twenty-one years old in Germany are now in the army, and asks boys in the United States to show their patriotism by enrolling for farm work for the vital task of increasing the food supply. Illinois is the first state to modify its school system because of the war.

DRILL AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

Charles Swain Thomas, in his *The Teaching of English in the Secondary School*, urges teachers to drill their classes in certain language elements "every day until every member of the class habitually gets 100 per cent." As the movement for minimum essentials gains vogue, advice such as this is likely to be mistaken and unintelligently followed by many English teachers. The truth is that every composition class contains pupils at almost opposite poles of expressional attainment. Pendleton, reporting his experience in the *English Journal*, affirms that in a recent class exercise of a high-school Freshman group some pupils were able to accomplish more than ten times as much memory work as the poorest. He has pupils who submit six long narratives in quick succession while their fellows are laboriously finishing one short tale. To be sure, Pendleton is speaking of individual differences pertaining to expression; but what he says is equally pertinent to differences in mastery over the mere mechanics of composition.

Apply to a typical high-school class of 25 pupils Thomas' doctrine of drill until all pupils attain 100 per cent. At the very beginning of the term ten pupils may be masters of the minimum essentials in punctuation

appropriate for this grade. For these ten all drill in punctuation is wasted time from the outset. But for the good of their fifteen classmates we may probably justify drill extending over a reasonable period. Every composition teacher knows that after weeks of drill approximately five of the original twenty-five will still be woefully deficient in punctuation. If now we assume that one month suffices for bringing ten of the fifteen up to a level of reasonable proficiency, every minute of drill after that time is waste for twenty of the twenty-five. According to Thomas, for the sake of the five who have not, and probably cannot master punctuation, the entire class is to be kept indefinitely marking time.

There is one possible way in which Thomas' dictum might be literally applied. A well-conducted composition class makes it possible for pupils of varying capacities to go forward at different rates of speed. Pendleton keeps in the same grade pupils who differ in narration at the ratio 1:6; who differ in memorizing ability 1:10. In any good composition laboratory there are many periods in which not all of the pupils are engaged in the same activity. We may therefore think of the five who remain deficient in punctuation after the four weeks' drill as spending part of their laboratory time on the same troublesome elements for another month and perhaps another. Meantime their classmates, busily engaged in composition projects suitable to their own needs, are spared the dry-rot of more punctuation.

Would that it were possible for someone to calculate the enormous loss sustained by capable pupils who are regimented with dullard classmates. In no department must this danger be more carefully guarded against than in English composition.

A RECOMMENDATION TO PRINCIPALS

Secure from the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, Bulletin No. 22, 1917, entitled *The Money Value of Education*, prepared by A. Coswell Ellis. Free. Ask for a sufficient number of copies to enable every child in your Freshman class and in your eighth grade to read the bulletins. Just to look at the attractive and easily understood graphs will be a powerful inducement for ambition to stay in school. Four years of high-school education means a lifelong 50 per cent increase in earning capacity. Mr. Ellis' bulletin shows this in terms any boy or girl can see.

CORRELATION OF ENGLISH AND CONTENT SUBJECTS

(*A communication. The editors invite further discussion.*)

To the Editor of "School Review":

Re: criticism in November number, page 676, of the Stamford (Conn.) High School Conferences on Marking:

First: "Language habits are best acquired and maintained in connection with content subjects; the proper place to teach composition is in close association with the written and spoken word of content subjects."

Agreed.

Second: "Many a progressive English department is welcoming themes written by their pupils in classes other than English."

So do I; so do (almost all the English department) "we." The co-ordination, permeation, and even supremacy of English is our object too.

Wherein then do we differ?

1. You assume that all teachers will teach English—correct mistakes, red-ink the composition of their written exercises, etc. We don't. We have pulled our heads out of that sand. You acknowledge there are some "wasps." Perhaps we have some. But we have also many "ants" who are so intent on building their hills that systematic, opportune, motivated English teaching gets by them. Our content-subject teachers by no means ignore the composition (especially the oral) of their pupils. But they cannot "follow up"—follow up, the greatest phrase for English teachers as for advertisers. How best follow up? Who best can follow up?

2. You assume that our "teachers of history, Latin, and the rest" maintain that they have no concern in English. Wrong. They have; and they manifest it probably more systematically than under the hydra-headed plan of every teacher a theme-corrector.

3. "The idea that a class exercise in any topic can be 100 per cent perfect in spite of the fact that it contains grammatical errors is about as sensible as saying that a man is 100 per cent ready for a dinner party even if his necktie be missing."

Mixed figures, though clever. Wrong analogy. If he is hungry, he is ready for dinner; he *thinks* so anyway. His attire being faulty, he goes to his chamber for his necktie, not to the dining-room. If a student is hungry for his chemistry work, he is ready for that dinner; if his English attire is faulty, why have him put on his grammatical necktie

in the lab? Why not rather in the English chamber where he can make proper selection of neckties? We both agree that he isn't ready; but I recognize a healthy (chemistry) appetite and capacity for digestion and also a slovenly (English) attire that must be remedied without impugning his love for a good dinner.

4. "A fault in English is not and never can be extraneous to the subject-matter presented. . . . The most weighty fact if faultily presented becomes less than 100 per cent perfect in its functioning relations."

Let me answer by quoting further, "How utterly contradictory to the facts of life." My plumber is not worth his hire because he informs me that he "done that job good"? And he will not get his check because he spells my name wrong? The drill sergeant isn't perfect because he abuses good American gentlemen in cockney English? The Senior's project in physics must be discounted because he writes its description with scientific accuracy marred by dearth or profusion of commas? The maid makes excellent pie, but doesn't make the bed properly; ergo, she lacks perfection; therefore I will not recommend her as a pie-maker.

5. But the core of our difference is that you seem to think that we separate English from the content subjects because we separate the English "marks" from the content-subject marks.

OUR PLAN

Our Stamford plan assumes:

1. Co-ordination of English in the school.
2. Motivation in the content subjects and in extra-school experiences.
3. Full recognition of ability where ability is shown. "Render unto Caesar."
4. "Follow-up" teaching in English by those presumably most competent.

How? One illustration will serve to answer. A paper is turned in on Lloyd-George's plan for centralized military control. "The data, the facts, and the substance" of the paper reveal (1) clear definitions; (2) research, reading, work; (3) organization of ideas.

The paper is clearly an "excellent" one.

But it needs much improvement in English. The history teacher marks it, shows, where necessary, the relation of exact expression to clarity of thought. He marks it "excellent," however.

The English teacher on a required and periodic round collects this paper with many others. This collection should be a regular duty.

This particular paper may or may not lead to special conference of the English and the history teachers; it may or may not lead to a series of requisitions upon the history department for subsequent work of that pupil.

In a word, *our English department goes into* the other departments to get its correct point of view in teaching the English of those departments; *your plan is for the other departments*—wasps, ants, and bugs (every high-school boy thinks there is at least one in every faculty)—*to go into the English work* and only half do the job.

Who is responsible for the English, anyway? What do you think of any system of divided responsibility? Which administrative plan is really “contradictory to the facts of *business life*”?

Sincerely yours,

FREDERICK S. CAMP

STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

November 22, 1917